

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving different search requests from users;

logging the different search requests;

expanding the logged search requests;

for each term in the expanded logged search requests, assigning a weight to the term based on how close the term is to a corresponding one of the received different search requests;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm to the weighted, expanded logged search requests based on content of the expanded logged search requests, thereby grouping similar search requests together;

identifying, using a semantic net hierarchy, a lowest-level term in the hierarchy that subsumes all queries in a grouping of search requests; and

communicating the identified term to a user.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the expanding is performed using a thesaurus.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the expanding is performed using a semantic net comprising synonyms and super-terms.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving different search requests from users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the different search requests, yielding respective search results, each search result defining selected digital media records, the digital media records each having associated metadata;

logging the search results and the metadata associated with digital media records selected therein;

expanding the metadata, defining expanded query metadata results;

for each term in the expanded query metadata results, assigning a weight to the term based on how close the term is to a corresponding one of the received different search requests;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm to the weighted, expanded query metadata results based on content of the expanded query metadata results, thereby grouping similar expanded query metadata results together;

identifying, using a semantic net hierarchy, a lowest-level term in the hierarchy that subsumes all of the expanded query metadata results in the grouping of expanded query metadata results; and

communicating the identified term to a user.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the expanding is performed using a thesaurus.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the expanding is performed using a semantic net comprising synonyms and super-terms.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving different search requests from users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the different search requests, yielding respective search results, each search result defining selected digital media records or being empty;

logging the search requests for which the search result is empty;

expanding the logged search requests;

for each term in the expanded logged search requests, assigning a weight to the term based on how close the term is to a corresponding one of the received different search requests;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm to the weighted, expanded logged search requests based on content of the expanded logged search requests, thereby grouping similar search requests together; and

communicating a group of search requests to a user.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the expanding is performed using a thesaurus.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the expanding is performed using a semantic net comprising synonyms and super-terms.

10. (Currently Amended) A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the system permitting user expressions of interest in particular stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving different search requests from users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the different search requests, yielding respective search results, each search result defining selected digital media records;

receiving expressions of interest from users with respect to selected digital media records;

logging the search requests for which a user has expressed interest in a selected digital media record;

expanding the logged search requests;

for each term in the expanded logged search requests, assigning a weight to the term based on how close the term is to a corresponding one of the received different search requests;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm to the weighted, expanded logged search requests based on content of the expanded logged search requests, thereby grouping similar search requests together;

communicating a group of search requests to a user.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the expanding is performed using a thesaurus.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the expanding is performed using a semantic net comprising synonyms and super-terms.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, comprising:

creating a vector for each expanded, weighted logged search request; and

arranging the created vectors into a matrix;

wherein the applying comprises applying the statistical clustering algorithm to the matrix.

21. (New) The method of Claim 4, comprising:

creating a vector for each weighted, expanded query metadata result; and

arranging the created vectors into a matrix;

wherein the applying comprises applying the statistical clustering algorithm to the matrix.

22. (New) The method of Claim 7, comprising:

creating a vector for each expanded, weighted logged search request; and

arranging the created vectors into a matrix;

wherein the applying comprises applying the statistical clustering algorithm to the matrix.

23. (New) The method of Claim 10, comprising:

creating a vector for each expanded, weighted logged search request; and

arranging the created vectors into a matrix;

wherein the applying comprises applying the statistical clustering algorithm to the matrix.